

#### RELATED TERMS

- Exercise Control
- Exercise Logistics
- Local Emergency Planning Committee



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#### PRIMARY DISCIPLINES

- Emergency Management
- State and Local Executive Offices

## PRACTICE NOTE

### Exercise Program Management: The Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security's Mobile Exercise Laboratory

#### PRACTICE

The Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security (BHS) developed a Mobile Exercise Laboratory (MEL) to provide all required resources for an operations-based exercise. The laboratory carries exercise supplies and can serve as a master control cell or a simulation cell during an exercise.

#### DESCRIPTION

The Idaho BHS sponsors annual exercises with each of its Local Emergency Planning Committees (LEPC). Many of the LEPCs are located in rural jurisdictions that have neither the standard exercise equipment nor the integrated communications capabilities necessary to track exercise play. The Idaho BHS began development of the MEL in 2005 to address this challenge.

The BHS purchased a large cargo trailer and converted it into a MEL that can transport equipment to exercise venues throughout the state. The MEL is equipped with 11 V/UHF radios, a 20-line telephone switch, and standard exercise supplies including identification vests, signs, and folding tables. The trailer can also serve as a master control cell or a simulation cell during an exercise. The MEL provides exercise planners with command, control, and communications capabilities directly adjacent to the exercise location. Idaho BHS officials found that the MEL offered a cost-effective method of having standard equipment at any exercise venue in the state.

The Idaho BHS also notes that they have successfully used the MEL as a mobile emergency operations center during a real-world disaster.

#### CITATIONS

Fishburne, Josh. Exercise Director, Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security. Interview with *Lessons Learned Information Sharing*, 21 Jul 2006.

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